

NHS Frimley Integrated Care System

Case studies of excellent practice

NHS England published the refreshed [Equality Delivery System](#) in 2022, which uses Services, Workforce and Leadership Domains to drive improvement for patients, staff and leaders. It was complimented by the publication of the [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Improvement Plan](#) in June 2023. This body of work set six High Impact Actions for NHS organisations to address between its' publication date and March 2026.

In recognising the duality of this reporting, we have developed this report showcasing workstreams and case studies that demonstrate our ongoing efforts. You can skip straight to a case study of interest by clicking on the contents list.

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Communities

Anti-Racism CommUNITY Forum & Multi-Faith Education Programme

Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (BHFT) have worked with their Staff Race Equality Network to design and launch their ongoing Anti-Racism work at both workforce and service user levels. This included their Anti-Racism CommUNITY Forum Launch event, which held an in-person panel event to hear community organisations' hopes and plans for delivering effective action together.



The Forum will continue to scope year one activity and develop Terms of Reference, as well as being involved in steering projects and improving services. Feedback from the CommUNITY Forum so far has included:

“You have to bend the stick before it grows into a tree.”

“This is such an engaging, energizing space to be in. There will be so much learning to do, but that’s what will make the best outcomes for our communities.”

BHFT are also in the process of launching a Multi-Faith Education Programme across both East and West Berkshire. This aims to improve staff training through online modules, videos and workshops, build partnerships and a directory of local businesses, and form a staff network that will offer student placements.

Frimley Integrated Care System Language Project

This Language Project has been created to support GP Practices and other Healthcare Services communicate via text messages in other languages to their patients. Patients receive many messages from the NHS, but given the wide range of languages spoken, many patients cannot understand them. It is hoped that by having a simple process for translating messages this will improve patients' understanding, reduce the number of Did not Attends, thereby improving health outcomes and reducing missed appointments.

The ICS provides a list of professional resources, which includes generic translated text message templates for patients with messages kept to under 500 characters where possible.



Working with our Gypsy and Roma Traveler (GRT) Communities

Our System welcomes both permanent and transient members of the GRT community, and recognizes that this community has challenges in accessing support within health and social care.

One of our care coordinators within a GP practice has built a strong working relationship with the local GRT community. Liaising between the community and the ICB to strengthen collaborative working, one notable area of concern was support for young mothers and the health outcomes for their children. Our services came together to offer two different times and venues per week for the community to meet with Children's Services and discuss any issues they had. This project has been hugely successful in strengthening trust between the GRT community and service providers.

Following the ongoing success of building trust and providing services to the GRT community, the team delivered an educational webinar for staff as part of the 2023 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion System conference. This was gratefully received by both health and social care staff.

Working with our Asylum Seeker Communities

210 asylum seekers (residents) are currently accommodated in a local hotel in North East Hampshire & Farnham; some have been waiting 15 months waiting for the outcome of their asylum claim. Residents have come from war-torn countries,

some having faced persecution and others coming via unauthorized and unsafe trafficking routes. Countries of origin include Syria, Iraq, Albania, Hong Kong, Eritrea and Guatemala.

Living on only £8 per person per week, individuals and families found it hard to find activities that would stimulate children or themselves.

These residents are some of the most vulnerable people in our community and would be destitute without their accommodation. Language barriers and differences in their experiences of health and care systems mean navigating our local services is difficult. Young families have isolated children with dental decay and disheveled presentation in comparison to the local general population.

Staff and residents have reported feeling isolated, lacking connection with the local community, and unable to access some health and care services.

Working with hotel staff, a Health Day was arranged at the hotel. It included talks and discussion groups with professionals and interpreters to advise on primary care access, family planning advice and support, screening advice, the Healthier Together App (advising on the ability to translate information) and community offers for children and their families including Bernardo's, The Woodland Trust, Aldershot Football Association, Citizen's Advice Rushmoor and local offers from Churches like Stay and Play. Children had the opportunity to play football with the Aldershot Football Association and craft activities with the Woodland Trust while their parents took part in the talks. Sessions were rated with attendees using face symbols.

The outcome identified the high and complex needs of asylum seekers. It was clear that Asylum seekers' experiences were varied, but all were challenged by living at the hotel. The accommodation provider has complete access to food, which is repetitive and poorly balanced. Residents had access barriers to basic advice and information, entitlements and payments. Some had no school places or uniform, while others weren't accessing essential health and care services.

One high-risk case was a lady who wasn't registered with a GP and hotel staff described her as being in a "catatonic state". They were unsure how to support her or what to do.

Children were concerningly exceptionally excited by the Health Day and the ability to partake in activities. They told us this was "the best day of the whole summer". Staff running the event found it emotionally challenging as they hadn't anticipated such high needs. Some requested further cultural awareness due to the differences in expectations and communication; for example, some interactions were met with frustration and desperation, crying and shouting, which was unfamiliar to staff.

The lady was supported several times by SaBP, and following a period of time at the hospital, staff have reported her mental state is completely different and vastly improved.

A female Welfare Officer was appointed to work with mothers and their children to ensure they have access to care and school places, while an audit now shows all residents are registered with a GP.

Access to HC2 certificates was assessed to ensure they receive free NHS prescriptions and dental treatment (children with tooth decay were offered priority appointments). Residents were supported

with travel costs to receive treatment.

Voluntary services were engaged throughout and reported 'not being able to access or engage' with the hotel staff or residents. They are now introduced and offering support to the residents' community. They have organized second-hand winter coats, toys and children's clothes. Some of the residents have registered to volunteer with local groups, because the hotel doesn't allow families to cook, one center has offered cooking facilities for families to access.

There is now a multi-agency welfare group, jointly chaired by NHS Frimley and Rushmoor Borough Council, and including the voluntary sector, Home Office, schools and statutory services. The group coordinates welfare and safeguarding support, and is involved in planning for further residents who are arriving in a neighbouring town.

Learning has been shared across the System to benefit residents in SHP. Working with Bartlett Group Practice and Children's Services at Surrey Heath Family Centre to ensure the Health & Wellbeing needs of people seeking asylum were met in a systematic way. A template was designed for the family centre liaison staff to gather information from people at the asylum hotel to ensure they were registered with the GP practice and then for services to be activated either at the GP practice or on site if available and appropriate.



As an Anti-Racist organisation, NHS Frimley has prioritized and spoken up for residents and demonstrated how partnership and collaboration can support the health outcomes and life chances of some of the most vulnerable in our communities.

Workforce

Embed fair and inclusive recruitment processes and talent management strategies that target under-representation and lack of diversity

Frimley ICB leads a System of organisations committed to inclusive recruitment, talent management and retention of staff. As detailed above (see section on EHRC Monitoring Project), we have developed and circulated an Inclusive Recruitment Toolkit.

Frimley Academy Leadership Programmes

Across the Frimley System, talent across our leadership workforce is developed through the Frimley Academy **20/20** and **Wavelength** Leadership Programmes, Frimley System **Cultural Intelligence (CQ) Network and Community of Practice**, and Frimley System **Mirror Board**.

The Frimley Academy has continued to build on the support it provides to the System delivery of our collective strategic Leadership, Culture, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion ambitions and objectives, fusing delivery of its flagship Academy programmes and opportunities, with support and development on a range of ambitious partnership initiatives working with partners locally, cross system and regionally with our partner health and care systems, our service is about whole system connectorship – system wide focused, person-centered, community led partnership working in its widest sense.

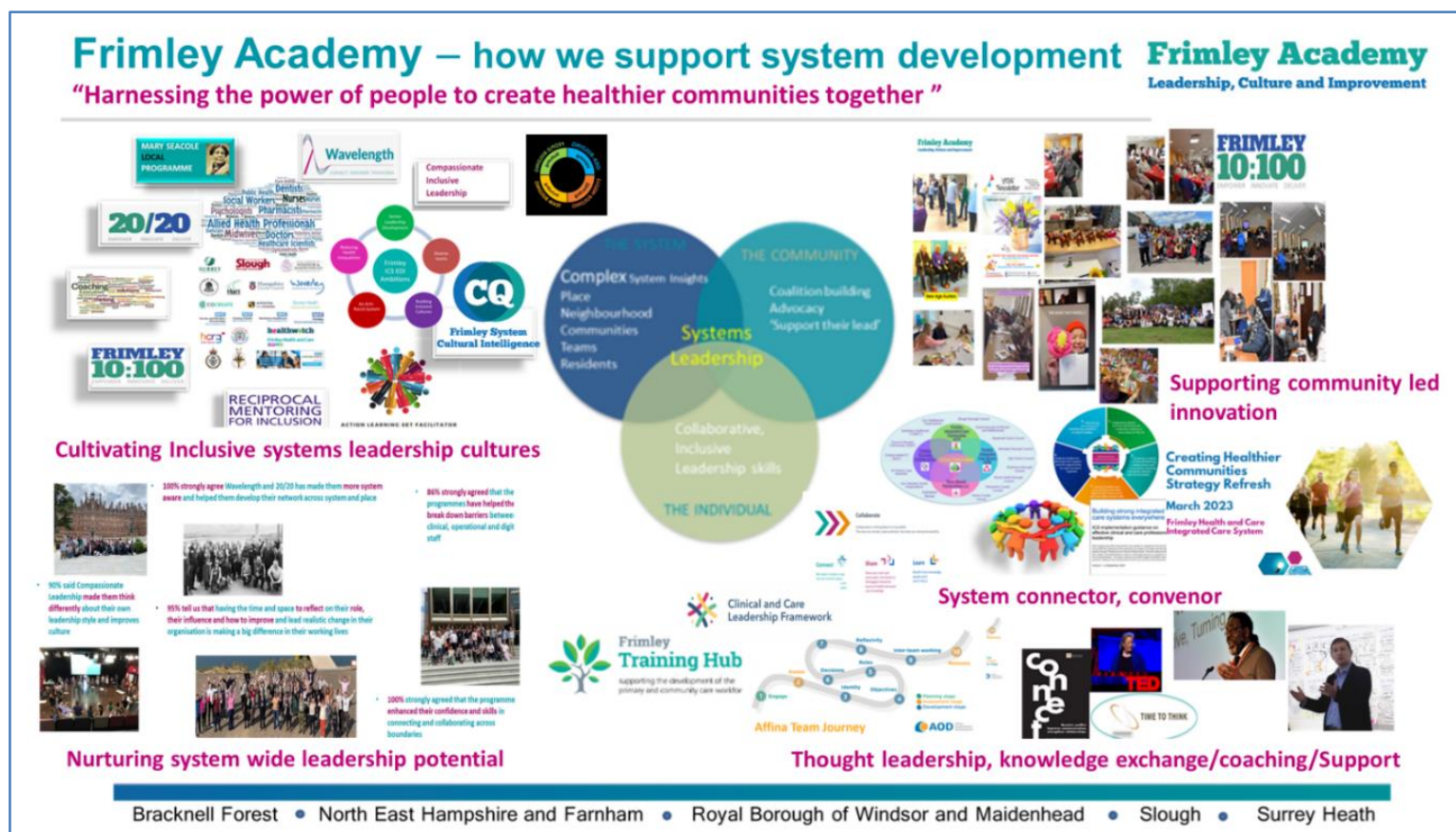
For a third successive year we have successfully increased transparency, visibility and access to hundreds of leadership, development support and opportunities that truly harness the leadership potential of all of our people, citizens, partners. In 2023 the Academy offered almost 200 places on their 20/20 and Wavelength leadership programmes. Both programmes bring together professionals from all parts of the System, including Health and Social Care, Local Government and Voluntary Sector. The Academy continues to be seen as pioneering catalysts for leadership and culture change, and creates networks of leaders committed to building capacity for inclusive system leadership to deliver joined up transformation and create healthier communities together.

In such challenging times, never more so has the spotlight shone so brightly on the need to embed inclusive system leadership cultures, networks of collaboration and partnership working across boundaries; building our collaborative leadership capacity and shared commitment is vital to tackling the deep-rooted system inequalities and complex challenges of our health and care system essential to transform health and care outcomes.



Support and access has also been extended across the System. The Academy have launched additional initiatives ranging from Team Development Support, Peer Support, Action Learning Sets and Coaching. The Academy have piloted the globally successful 4D Leadership Programme developed by NASA, which equips teams with the skills to create enhanced psychological safety and achieve higher overall team performance.

For more information, [click here](#).



Frimley ICS Mirror Board

Launched in 2023, as part of our system's drive to develop a diverse pipeline of future leaders across Frimley Health and Care, the Academy has supported the design and development of this exciting initiative working in collaboration with partners across the system to provide the opportunities for our people with leadership aspirations to have real influence and bring a diverse perspective to the decision making of Frimley Health and Care System.



Targeting under-representation and lack of diversity at Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (BHFT)

BHFT continue to collaborate with Staff Networks to promote intersectionality, They provide a platform for employees with common interests, backgrounds or identities to connect, support and empower one another. This includes campaigns such as "What's in a name?" and other Anti-Racism projects, which promote inclusion and equality within the organisation.

In October 2023, BHFT celebrated Black History Month (BHM) with their Race Equality Network. The theme, "Dig Deeper, Look Closer, Think Bigger," reflected their commitment to unity and diversity. BHM is a time to learn, unite and honour the rich history, culture and achievements of the Black community, and colleagues were invited to share inspiring personal stories, including a panel discussion with Gold'ers from the Windrush Generation and a BHM quiz.

Engagement and leadership presence was strong throughout the event, with CEO Julian Emms discussing the importance of having a diverse Trust. Speakers also discussed their lived experiences and upcoming Trust EDI objectives to tackle racism and inequality.

Combining this with the Anti-Racism Community and task force ensures that BHFT will continue to work closely with their BAME staff and Race Equality

Network to tackle racism. The Race Equality Network supports and promotes a diverse range of cultural events and projects for staff and provides a safe space for all members to discuss difficult conversations, by promoting a sense of belonging and inclusivity and raising cultural awareness among the workforce.

Talent Management at Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SaBP)

In proactively addressing talent management, our System Partners at SaBP used their Workforce Race Equality Standard and Workforce Disability Equality Standard data to identify longstanding themes that were not improving for staff with disabilities, long-term conditions and from Black, Asian & Minority Ethnicity backgrounds. Themes included staff feeling they had less positive opportunities for career progression, and staff being disproportionately referred to the disciplinary process. They further found the Staff Networks felt their had a high degree of responsibility without much structural support from the Trust.

SaBP developed and recruited an EDI Business Partner in conjunction with their Health and Wellbeing Team. They developed an EDI Strategy and restructured their Staff Networks to provide protected time for co-chairs, defined leadership roles, terms of reference and codes of conduct. Outstanding goals from the Staff Networks were linked to the EDI Business Partner, and were delivered over the course of 2023, including a 'BME Leadership Programme', regular Menopause Cafés, attendance at Pride in Surrey, launching a Disability and Wellness Passport, Living Library and a Women's network annual celebration event.

Additionally, the EDI Business Partner developed and embedded several tailored trainings to address the issues identified from staff feedback and reporting. This included a module on Inclusive and Compassionate Management in Leadership training, Unconscious Bias in Recruitment for all recruiting managers, Cultural Competency training across team away days, and Intercultural Conversations workshops for teams with reported communicative diversity. They hosted an internal EDI Conference and signed up to two the Apprenticeship Diversity Network and Pride in Veteran Standards Network accreditation schemes. Regular reflective sessions are facilitated with new cohorts of internationally recruited nursing staff, which has helped identify themes and issues being experienced. The International Recruitment team, Education Department and EDI Business Partner have worked together to develop tailored support to address these issues, for example extending subsidized accommodation in the first 6 months of staff joining SaBP.

This cohort of work has seen EDI become the highest scoring area of priority in the 2024 staff survey results. SaBP continue their EDI journey by developing a reverse mentoring programme, diversity champions for recruitment panels, supporting and developing their Staff Networks and collect experiential feedback to understand and address their workforce needs in talent management and workstreams.

Wellbeing Champions, Mental Health First Aiders and Equality

Advocates have also been established within the ICB. Staff can approach any of these colleagues to discuss and be signposted regarding health inequalities that they may be facing.

Reviewing reasonable adjustments at NHS Frimley

Over the last year, The Integrated Care Board have reviewed the process for providing reasonable adjustments to staff. Feedback included that the process was unclear and complex. The process was therefore reviewed and a clear flow established. A briefing was developed and delivered to line managers, and a presentation was provided to all staff on Access to Work.

Addressing Health Inequalities at Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust (FHFT): Giving Voice to the Seldom Heard

At FHFT there are an estimated 2,000 working carers and 800 disabled employees in the organisation (according to the NHS Staff Survey response count in 2022). Disability disclosure in the Trust is currently 2.7% which suggests there is under reporting of disability.

In 2022, the Staff with Disabilities and Carers Network designed a survey aimed at working carers in the Trust, in order to establish their experiences in the organisation. Overall carers were having positive experiences overall in the organisation. However some felt their health and well being needs were being affected by having to use annual leave for accompanying dependents to hospital appointments. Some of the appointments were often at short notice due to the impact of the pandemic, therefore carers had little choice other than to take the appointments when offered. Carers were using annual leave as they felt taking carers leave would be looked down upon or even not granted. A package of support was needed for working carers.

The Equality and Diversity Manager chairs the Staff With Disability and Carers Network and as part of the network's ambition to achieve Level One of the Carers Confident Kitemark, the Carers Survey was developed by the network to understand the experiences of working carers. The survey also aligns with the kitemark's priority of "Develop and implement your package of support for carers".

The staff network is sponsored by the CEO of FHFT and the CEO attends meetings to listen to staff experiences and provide support for interventions which improve outcomes for disabled staff and carers. A conversation took place at a network meeting where the CEO endorsed the network's proposal to increase carers leave to ten days from six days. In Sept 2022 the Board received the annual Equality report and approved the proposal for increasing carers leave contained within it.

During 2023 work began to amend the policy in consultation with internal stakeholders.

The relevant policy has been updated with up to 10 days carers leave being available; an implementation plan for this change is being developed and will be launched within FHFT. Allied to this change, a carers passport is being trialed with carers on the network which aims to support better understanding for managers of their staff needs that are carers. This passport is due for review in April 2024.

Develop a comprehensive induction, onboarding and development programme for internationally recruited staff

Some examples of how we are achieving race equality in recruitment and retention have been given in our “EHRC Monitoring Project Report”.

Working with Internationally Recruited staff at BHFT

Further in-depth work has been developed by colleagues within BHFT over the last 2 years. In the last 12 months, there has been specific focus on cultural transition, onboarding support and development opportunities for International Staff. This has included:

- Supporting booklets and documents, such as “Onboarding Recruitment”, “Practice Differences”, “Cost of living” and a “Manager Guide”
- Holding a tri-annual International Connect Event, and
- Recruitment of Cultural Transition Champions.

BHFT have achieved the NHS Pastoral Quality Care Award for this work. They have seen 100% pass rate in their OSCE results and seen International Staff retained and promoted. Networking opportunities provide solid connections to staff and there is better engagement from managers about recruiting and retaining international staff. BHFT are finding they have high referral rates and their survey feedback is very positive. They are intending to further develop and focus on internal and external PIN candidates.

Equality Advocates at NHS Frimley

Within NHS Frimley we reviewed Staff Survey results and identified that staff did not feel confident in raising concerns, and that BME staff were disproportionately affected by bullying and harassment in the workplace. We recruited 9 staff and delivered 3x 2-hour training modules with the aims of:

- Raising awareness of EDI in their local teams and directorates
- Helping identify and constructively challenge poor behaviours
- Signposting staff who may be struggling to appropriate resources
- Feed back in to, and therefore influence, the ICB’s EDI journey.

Cultural Intelligence Trainers across the ICS

Cultural Intelligence (also known as Cultural Quotient, or CQ) is the ability to relate to others and interact effectively across cultures and is vital component, contributing to psychological safety, staff well-being a healthy workplace and thriving inclusive cultures. Directly supporting System EDI strategic objectives, the Academy has provided training opportunities to create our first cohort of trained Cultural Intelligence facilitators from across the Frimley ICS. We formed the Frimley system CQ network and community of practice in November 2023, with planning underway for a series of workshops planned through 2024-25 designed to spread and embed CQ at the heart of everything we do.

Frimley ICS EDI Conference

In October 2023 we have held a System-wide 'EDI Conference Virtual Roadshow' entitled "Let's act on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion! Turning our words into real action". The conference saw 10 webinars delivered over a 2-week period. Our aims were to:

1. Understand where we have got to as a System since the last EDI Conference (October 2022)
2. Understand and explore the lived experiences of Frimley ICS staff
3. Have tangible "top tips" for participants to implement following the conference
4. Provide networking opportunities across the System

The webinars covered a breadth of topics, including but not limited to Cultural Intelligence, Race & Racism, Sexual Safety, the Gypsy and Roma Traveler Community and Neurodiversity. They were recorded for those unable to attend on the day or colleagues who wanted to revisit topics.

Feedback about the conference included:

Great to see a face in a leadership role who looks like me!
Brilliant to see such progress in NHS Leadership sectors.

It's important to make sure that progress is sustained.

It genuinely feels like progress is being made.
Are there more opportunities for us to get together and share all our work to learn from each other?